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ABSTRACT

This book examines the question of ideal educational aims in a democratic society. Using the 1988 National Curriculum mandated for English and Welsh schools as a concrete point of departure, the book calls attention to: the high degree of specificity of the large list of objectives and attainment targets; the massive structure built for the assessment of their achievement; and the lack of discussion and elaboration regarding the aims of the whole enterprise. The book argues that students should have a richer sense of what education in a democratic society is all about and offers three aims of education--personal autonomy, morality, and personal well-being. To teach morality in the schools, stakeholders must put aside the question of whose morality is being taught and substitute the teaching of altruism, or dispositions attentive to the well-being of others. The book also offers a critique of the knowledge-centered tradition of curriculum thinking and goal setting. It ends with a discussion of the arts as "an indispensable element in the good life." An index is included. (Contains 112 references.) (LMI)

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